Self-sufficiency in foodgrains

403. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have reviewed a recent report of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization forecasting *inter-alia* a ten million tonne decrease in world wheat production this year with a strong demand outlook and prices likely to remain generally high and volatile;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto, especially in view of the shortage being faced in our buffer stocks necessitating massive import of wheat; and

(c) the details of fresh initiatives being taken to achieve self-sufficiency in foodgrains and bridge the demand and supply gap on a durable basis to protect the interests of the common man?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) The report of decline in world wheat production by 10 million tonnes in 2006-07, has been forecasted by FAO in their Food Outlook, June, 2006. This is due to bulk reduction in United States, Russian Federation and Ukraine coupled with smaller reductions expected in Canada,India, Pakistan and Romania.

(b) To meet shortage in the buffer stocks the steps taken include importing 35 lakh tonnes of wheat, increase in procurement of rice and coarsegrains, rationalization of allocation to Above Poverty Line (APL) households based on offtake of wheat and allocation of coarsegrains in place of wheat under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) in States consuming coarsegrains.

(c) Major initiatives, *inter alia,* include the following: integrated Cereals Development Programme (ICDP) in Rice Based Cropping Systems areas (ICDP-Rice), ICDP-Wheat and ICDP- Coarse Cereals under Macro management of Agriculture (MMA). The scheme On Farm Water Management for Increasing Crop Production in Eastern India gives thrust to increase production and productivity.